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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

FEBRUARY 6, 1871.

Read twice, referred to the Committee on Reconstruction, and ordered to be printed.

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Mr. ARNELL, on leave, introduced the following bill:

**A BILL**

To incorporate the Freedmen's Homestead Company.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*  
3       That Charles W. Eldridge and Frederick G. Barbadoes, of  
4       Massachusetts; Frederick Douglass and Aaron M. Powell, of  
5       New York; E. M. Davis, of Pennsylvania; O. O. Howard,  
6       Richard J. Hinton, William D. O'Connor, Daniel R. Eaton,  
7       A. F. Boyle, J. W. Le Barnes, and William J. Wilson, of the  
8       District of Columbia; John M. Langston, of Ohio; R. W.  
9       Stokes, of Missouri; James T. Rapier, of Alabama; Abram  
10      Smith, of Tennessee; James H. Harris, of North Carolina;  
11      Oscar J. Dunn, of Louisiana; and Richard Nelson, of Texas,  
12      and their associates and successors, are hereby constituted a  
13      body corporate, by the name of the Freedmen's Homestead  
14      Company, and by that name may sue and be sued in any  
15      court of the United States.

1        SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That the general  
2 business and objects of the corporation hereby established  
3 shall be to aid in procuring homesteads in the States com-  
4 monly known as the Southern States of the Union, and to  
5 assist in the settlement thereon of persons formerly held in  
6 slavery and their descendants, and to foster industrial pur-  
7 suits, co-operative enterprises, and the acquirement of useful  
8 knowledge among them.

1        SEC. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That the corporation  
2 shall maintain its principal office in the city of Washington,  
3 and District of Columbia, but may establish its branches and  
4 agencies elsewhere, and shall have power to acquire, inherit,  
5 receive, hold, and convey real and personal property, and to  
6 do and perform all acts and things incident to the objects and  
7 purposes of the corporation, not inconsistent with the laws of  
8 the United States, which any individual or body corporate  
9 now has or shall have the right to do.

1        SEC. 4. *And be it further enacted,* That the business and  
2 affairs of the corporation shall be managed and directed by  
3 the board of trustees, who may make, establish, and prescribe  
4 all needful rules, regulations, and forms for carrying on the  
5 business and government of the corporation, and not less than  
6 nine trustees shall be a quorum for the transaction of business  
7 at any regular or adjourned meeting of the board. The per-  
8 sons named in the first section of this act shall be the first

9 trustees of the corporation, and the number of trustees may  
10 be increased to fifty by the election by the board of additional  
11 members; and any trustee omitting to attend the regular  
12 meetings of the board for six consecutive months, without  
13 reasons satisfactory to the board, may be considered to have  
14 vacated the office, and a successor may be elected to fill the  
15 vacancy. The board of trustees shall annually, on the first  
16 Monday of December, make a report to Congress of the ope-  
17 rations of the company for the proceeding year; and the  
18 books and affairs of the company shall at all times be open  
19 to the inspection and examination of such persons as Con-  
20 gress may designate and appoint.

1       SEC. 5. *And be it further enacted*, That the corporation  
2 may receive any gift or bequest of lands or property as a  
3 special trust upon such conditions and for such purposes, not  
4 contrary to the Constitution and laws of the United States,  
5 and compatible with the general purposes and objects of the  
6 corporation, as may be expressed by the grantor or deviser  
7 and accepted by the corporation, which trusts shall be faith-  
8 fully administered in the interests and for the benefit of those  
9 for whom the same may be intended and prescribed.

1       SEC. 6. *And be it further enacted*, That if any person,  
2 whether under color of State authority or, otherwise, shall  
3 interfere with, assault, menace, or obstruct any officer or agent  
4 of the corporation hereby established while in the proper and

5 legal discharge of his duties, or in the proper and legal prosecu-  
6 tion of the business of the corporation, or shall maltreat or by  
7 force or menace, and whether under color of State authority  
8 or otherwise, intimidate, prevent, or obstruct any of the per-  
9 sons designated in the second section of this act from remov-  
10 ing to, settling upon, or peaceably occupying the homesteads  
11 which may be obtained for them under this act, or of avail-  
12 ing themselves of any of the advantages intended to be  
13 secured to them by the provisions of this act, or shall in any  
14 manner conspire in, counsel, encourage, aid, or abet any such  
15 interference, assault, menace, maltreatment, or obstruction, such  
16 person shall be deemed guilty of a crime, and shall, upon con-  
17 viction thereof, be punished by a fine of not less than five hun-  
18 dred dollars, and by imprisonment not more than five years.

1       SEC. 7. *And be it further enacted,* That the district courts  
2 of the United States, within their respective districts, shall  
3 have, exclusively of the courts of the several States, cogni-  
4 zance of all crimes and offenses committed against the pro-  
5 visions of this act, and also, concurrently with the circuit  
6 courts of the United States, of any cause, civil or criminal,  
7 to which said corporation, its officers, agents, or beneficiaries  
8 may be a party; and if any suit or prosecution against said  
9 corporation, its officers, agents, or beneficiaries, shall be com-  
10 menced in any State court, the party defendant in such suit  
11 or prosecution shall have the right to remove such cause for

12 trial to the proper district or circuit court in the manner pre-  
13 scribed by the " Act relating to habeas corpus, and regulating  
14 judicial proceedings in certain cases," approved March three,  
15 eighteen hundred and sixty-three, and all acts amendatory  
16 thereof; and the provisions of the act entitled " An act to  
17 protect all persons in the United States in their civil rights,  
18 and furnish the means of their vindication," which became a  
19 law on the ninth day of April, eighteen hundred and sixty-  
20 six, shall, so far as the same may be applicable to any pro-  
21 ceedings under this act, or to any cause commenced in or  
22 removed to any court of the United States under this act, be  
23 extended thereto.